COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

Questions & Answers

to

RFP No. 902000

### for

Third-Party Administrator – Flexible Spending Accounts and Commuter Benefits

**Networking/Bidders Conference Held on April 28, 2021**

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| **This County of Alameda, General Services Agency (GSA), RFP Questions & Answers (Q&A) has been electronically issued to potential bidders via e-mail. E-mail addresses used are those in the County’s Small Local Emerging Business (SLEB) Vendor Database or from other sources. If you have registered or are certified as a SLEB, please ensure that the complete and accurate e-mail address is noted and kept updated in the SLEB Vendor Database. This RFP Q&A will also be posted on the GSA Contracting Opportunities website located at** [**Alameda County Current Contracting Opportunities**](https://gsa.acgov.org/do-business-with-us/contracting-opportunities/)**.** |

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Thank you for your participation and interest in the County of Alameda.

All the questions are direct copy and paste from written questions emailed by Bidders. In the answers of these questions, the County of Alameda shall be noted as “County”. The Questions and Answers are the final stance of the County. Please consider this document in preparation of your bid response.

**Questions and Answers:**

1. The RFP requests “custom debit cards.” Does the County have customized cards now? Can you describe the customization?
   1. **The County’s current third-party vendors debit cards are customized with cobranded County and the vendor’s logo.**
2. Is the current contract 3 years without any option to renew or extend? If there is an option, why has the County elected to bid at this time rather than extend?
   1. **The current contract is three-years with an option to extend an additional two- years. The County is looking to competitively consolidate our Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and Commuter Third Party Administrators (TPAs) into one.**
3. Why has enrollment declined over the past year years?
   1. **The primary reason for our enrollment decline has been due to the COVID-19 pandemic.**
4. Does the current contract utilize SLEBs? Please provide the SLEB name?
   1. **No.**
5. Please provide the current fees billed by the incumbent to the County?
   1. **Commuter $2.92 per Employee, Health FSA $2.40 per Employee, Dependent FSA $2.40 per Employee and Adoption Asst. FSA $16.67 per Employee**
6. Please describe how claims are funded, and the frequency?
   1. **The County receives bi-weekly funding request from the vendor and they are paid via ACH within 48 hours.**
7. Are there any pain points or servicing issues to mitigate?
   1. **The County has found that vendors tend to communicate that they are able to work with PeopleSoft and are flexible in setting up Interface File transmissions. There is a learning period at the beginning of the process, but all vendors have been able to work with the County’s PeopleSoft system.**
8. Is bidder required to upload **BIDDER FORM 902000 (FINANCIAL SPREADSHEET WITH PRICING)** as a separately uploaded document or should this form be included with the larger bid packet including EXHIBITS A and B?
   1. **The Bidder should upload the Excel Bid Form separately as a separate attachment.**
9. Does your Commuter Benefits program work similarly to an FSA type program whereby the employee makes an election for a contribution amount and that amount is posted or deposited into their account and then the member selects transit vouchers, debit cards, smart cards, etc. **or** is this an ordering type program whereby the member orders their transit benefits (vouchers, debit cards, transit smart cards) through the vendor’s site and the vendor then advises the County of the amount that needs to be deducted via payroll based on the order? Can members change their election monthly or on the regularly-scheduled payroll cycle?
   1. **The Commuter program requires employees to enroll through the County. An Interface file is submitted with the employee’s deduction amount to the vendor on a bi-weekly basis. Employees can use their debit card to purchase vouchers, transit smart cards, or pay for parking expenses. Members can change their deduction amount at any time and the change is effective the next available pay period based on the change date.**
10. How does an employee use their commuter card to pay for parking on County premises? Is on premise parking managed by the County?
    1. **If it is a County owned parking structure, employee’s parking deductions are setup via payroll internally and the employee does not use the Commuter program.**
11. Does the County promote/encourage sustainable commute modes for eligible commuters? If so, how?
    1. **The County promotes sustainable commuting modes by communicating through various employee communications alternative sustainable commute modes. Our General Services Agency’s Sustainability Division also hosts various events throughout the year promoting sustainable commute modes.**
12. The requirements indicate the County reserves the right to waive the small/emerging local business participation requirements on contracts over $25,000 if the additional estimated cost to the County, which may result from inclusion of the requirements, exceeds five percent (5%) of the total estimated contract amount or Ten Thousand Dollars ($10,000), whichever is less. **Question:** If bidder determines it meets these thresholds for a waiver, is there still a requirement to complete the SLEB Information Sheet? How should the bidder reflect a request for a waiver in its proposal?
    1. **Yes, SLEB Information Sheet should be completed by the bidder. The County will determine if the SLEB can be waived. If you have any exceptions and clarifications to the bid documents including the SLEB requirement, please use the Exceptions and Clarifications Forms on Exhibit A, page 14. Please note that the County is under no obligations to accept any exceptions and clarifications and such exceptions and clarifications may be basis for bid disqualification.**
13. The RFP indicates Bidders must meet the County’s Small and Emerging Locally Owned Business requirements in order to be considered for the contract award. Those requirements indicate Bidders not meeting the definition of a small or emerging local business must subcontract with one or more County certified small and/or emerging local businesses for at least twenty percent (20%) of the total bid amount in order to be considered for contract award. **Question:** Is the twenty percent (20%)  an absolute requirement, or may bidder still be considered for the contract award if it makes a good faith effort? If a good faith effort is acceptable, what is the criteria for determining whether or not a good faith effort has been achieved?
    1. **Please see A12. Bidders who are not a certified SLEB are required to meet the 20% subcontracting. Bidders may search for subcontractor through our database.** [**https://www.acgov.org/sleb\_query\_app/gsa/sleb/query/slebmenu.jsp**](https://www.acgov.org/sleb_query_app/gsa/sleb/query/slebmenu.jsp)
14. Direct payment to participants with individualized statements. **Question:** Does the reference to ***individualized statements*** mean an Explanation of Benefits or Payment Statement? Or is this a reference to a full account statement that is generally sent quarterly or made available on demand through the member portal?
    1. **Page 11 of the RFP, Section E. (SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS) item 31.c. states*:***

***The bidder will be required to provide a complete description of administrative services including but not limited to the following:***

***c. Direct payment to participants with individualized statements that can be obtained on demand through the member portal.***

1. Provide a toll-free 800 number for employer and participant increase. **Question**: Should this read as follows, “Provide a toll-free 800 number for employer and participant ***inquiries***? If not, please explain what you mean by **“*employer and participant increase”*?** 
   1. **Yes. In the RFP - E. Specific Requirements #31, f. should be “inquiries”. Please see Addendum No. 1.**
2. I would like to confirm how many employees are currently on the FSA? It looks like the number is 3,996 is that correct?
   1. **The County currently has 3,862 employees enrolled in Flexible Spending Accounts.**
3. We also provide Adoption Assistance, can we quote that also?
   1. **The RFP requires a TPA for Health, Dependent Care, Adoption Assistance Flexible Spending Accounts and Commuter Benefits.**

**Please refer to Bid Form, which is asking to provide cost for Adoption Assistance.**

1. Under Scope B.1.E, can you provide more detail on what will be requested to be co-branded?
   1. **Debit cards, marketing materials and microsite should be co-branded.**
2. Are you asking for a 60-day implementation process? If a vendor can’t do a 60-day implementation, are they eliminated?
   1. **The County is looking for the Contract to start by September 1, 2021 to ensure we are ready to go live on January 1, 2022. The Vendor will not be eliminated if they cannot do a 60-Day implementation. However, the TPA must be fully implemented, employee communications distributed and debit cards received prior to January 1, 2022.**
3. Why is the County evaluating new vendors?
   1. **The County is looking to competitively consolidate our FSA and Commuter TPAs into one vendor in an effort to potentially reduce cost, streamline administration, and enhance participant convenience and their experience accessing these benefits.**
4. Are there specific challenges currently, or other priorities you would like to have addressed?
   1. **Ideally, the County would like to have one debit card for both FSA and Commuter Benefits.**
5. What is the current pricing in place?
   1. **Please see A5.**
6. Will references be contacted, during the evaluation process or after selection of a finalist?
   1. **Please refer to Bid Response Packet, Page 11, which states: The County may contact some or all of the references provided in order to determine Bidder’s performance record on work similar to that described in this request. The County reserves the right to contact references other than those provided in the Response and to use the information gained from them in the evaluation process**.